



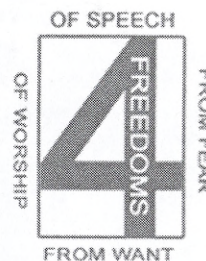
# STONEWALL NEWS

STONEWALL DEMOCRATIC CLUB, SACRAMENTO

WINTER 2005

PO BOX 161623, SACRAMENTO CA 95816-1623

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## President's Address

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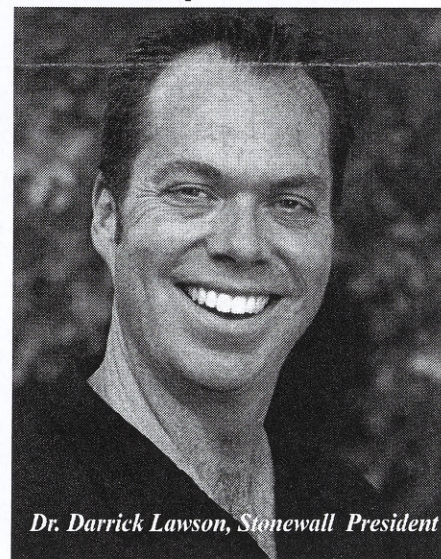
I want to personally thank all of you who helped in the recent election.

# 35955

I am very proud of Sacramento Stonewall. I am especially proud of our Vice President Ron Spingarn, who earlier this year I appointed to be Stonewall's liaison to the Alliance for a Better California and to the No on 73 campaigns. He was a critical key disseminating up to date information weekly to our members about how they could become involved. I am also very proud of our past President, Dan Roth. It was under his leadership that we took the early position on these initiatives. With his wisdom, he saw early on the game the governor was playing. And his leadership helped us all to see that our friends in the unions and the women's rights groups were going to need our help.

Here is a short list of how we played an effective role:

- ▼ We were the first club in the area to endorse a NO position on Propositions 73 through 78.
- ▼ We sent a voter card at our expense to over 4000 voters explaining the devastating effect each initiative would have on the LGBT community. Written by myself and Dan Roth, coordinated with our own graphic artist, and a mailing list put together by our very own membership chair, Ed Bennett, this piece was sent to every registered domestic partner household in Sacramento County, every one who had signed a petition at Stonewall's booths at Pride and Rainbow Festival, to all past members of Stonewall, and to all current members of Stonewall.
- ▼ Bar Outreach. Another 500 cards were given out when our volunteers hit the bars for GOTV weekend. Face to face meetings with registered voters alerting them to the importance of this election.
- ▼ We ran and paid for a 3/4-page advertisement in Outword Magazine outlining our positions and the consequences to the LGBT.
- ▼ It was Stonewall who helped the Rainbow Chamber, which had been leaning towards no action in the race, to understand the terrible impact these initiatives could have had on the LGBT community. With presentations by Dan Roth and myself, the Chamber turned around and unanimously endorsed a no position on Propositions 73 through 78.
- ▼ We walked precincts.
- ▼ We phone banked.
- ▼ We raised money.



*Dr. Darrick Lawson, Stonewall President*

## Stonewall Officers

Dr. Darrick Lawson....President  
Ron Spingarn....Vice President  
Sam Catalano....Treasurer  
Ben Kallo....Secretary  
Ed Bennett....Membership Chair  
Sheila DeBlonk....Fundraising  
Laurie McBride....Political Action  
Committee  
Gretchen Bender.....National Stonewall  
Representative

We were a force. We helped our Democratic brothers and sisters fight a very evil agenda. I am proud of the Alliance for a Better California. I am proud of our union allies. I am proud of the many who believe in a woman's constitutional rights to control what happens to her body. This is the very reason we are involved, and why we are members.

Unfortunately, we cannot rest. We must be ever vigilant because those who want to take away our civil rights do not rest. I want to let you know about a very serious issue facing the lesbian and gay community in California.



Our right-wing opponents are currently gathering signatures to put up to several constitutional amendments on the June and/or November 2006 ballots. All of them would put limited definition of marriage into the state constitution. Even worse, all of them would eliminate all benefits that domestic partnership currently available to gay and lesbian couples.

We know at least one of the proposed constitutional amendments will qualify. That means that in 2006 our status as citizens will be put to a vote not once but twice. If any one of these ballot measures passes, we could see over 35 years of civil rights legislation overturned.

The stakes are unbelievably high. We see this as the most important and serious battles we have fought to date. We will not and cannot back down.

That is why on October 22, 2005, the Board of Directors of the Stonewall Democratic Club of Greater Sacramento voted to make this fight our number one priority until the June election. Until our own future is secure, we must pull back from our usual fundraising activities and generous donations to locally elected officials, community allies, charities, and even other gay and gay friendly candidates throughout the state.

Instead, we ask for your help. Here is what you can do for us.

Instead of seeking funds from us, give to us--and give generously.

Make your opposition to the constitutional amendments public.

Work with us against the constitutional amendments. If you are running for office, campaign against them as part of your own campaign for office.

Educate your own family, your friends, your co-workers, and your church on the bigotry and hatred behind these initiatives.

We will return to supporting the fight for our friends and allies after we have focused all our resources against this attack. However, today we need your help so we can preserve basic civil rights for our community.

Dr. Darrick Lawson, Stonewall President  
[president@sacstonewall.org](mailto:president@sacstonewall.org)

## *My Personal Thanks To Stonewall*

*I wish to extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to the Stonewall Democratic Club of Greater Sacramento for sponsoring a table at the recent 2005 Unity Bar Dinner. For those of you who do not know, the Unity Bar is an association of five bar associations in Sacramento county, including Sacramento Lawyers for the Equality of Gays and Lesbians (Sac LEGAL), with missions to eliminate bias and discrimination in the legal profession and in our legal system based on sexual orientation, race or gender. All of these individual associations are affiliates of the Sacramento County Bar Association.*

*Every year in October, the Unity Bar group hosts a dinner to raise funds and to present community service awards to individual members from each of the associations. This year, Sac LEGAL presented an award to a member who also happens to be an active member of the Stonewall Democratic Club of Greater Sacramento. Stonewall sponsored a table at this year's dinner and many Stonewall members attended.*

*Approximately 250 people attended the dinner, including many Sacramento area lawyers, judges and elected officials. I know there were many good reasons for Stonewall to sponsor a table at this dinner. I can personally confirm there were at least two new Stonewall memberships that night, and I know it contributed to Stonewall's stature and visibility in the Sacramento legal community. This does not, however, detract from the wonderful support I felt from Stonewall as an organization and its members. I am an active member of both Stonewall and Sac LEGAL, and I sincerely thank Stonewall for its support for Sac LEGAL, Sac LEGAL's mission and its members.*

*Todd Vlaanderen*



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## **Congratulations Stonewall Democrats!**

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# PUTTING GAY ON THE 2006 BALLOT IN CALIFORNIA

By Laurie McBride

Lucky us. We are the favorite target. 14 different initiatives to eliminate domestic partnerships and limit marriage to one-man-one-woman in the state constitution have been filed... so far.

The bigots just can't seem to decide on the best wording. In fact, the rabid right have had a little dust up over the best wording. Two camps with dueling initiatives are now competing for signatures. Either or both could put forward its constitutional amendment on the June 2006 ballot... or the November 2006 ballot... or both. Egads.

One thing is certain, however. All the permutations and variations add the marriage limitation to the state constitution. All would eliminate domestic partnership rights and responsibilities as we know it.

EQUALITY FOR ALL is the statewide campaign that has formed to fight whatever ends up on the ballot next year. This campaign committee is made up of representatives of major advocacy organizations throughout the state, including Stonewall Democrats. (See below)

NEXT STEPS: by the end of December anyone wanting to put an initiative or constitutional amendment on the June 2006 ballot will have to turn in their signatures. It takes around 500,000 valid signatures (so most groups will turn in 600-700k to be on the safe side.) So, by the end of December we'll know what we are facing in June... and have a better idea of what we might be facing in November as well.

Equality for All is launching an educational campaign within the LGBT communities and among our allies to alert them of the coming ballot fight. We simply can't afford to wait. We must start our campaign now.

Equality for All is also committed to seeing that our campaign does adequate outreach to allied and minority communities. That means reaching out to friends early. That means asking experts within minority communities to help us with targeted messages.

Sacramento Stonewall has made fighting whatever anti-gay nonsense ends up facing us in 2006 our number one priority. This attack on our community is extraordinary. We must make sure that we do everything possible to defeat it before we expend resources on normal electoral activities.

National Stonewall Democrats led the way in targeting Representative Santorum of Pennsylvania in next year's election. If resources permit, our fight here in California may be added as a national priority.

Imagine that... Defeating homophobic Santorum in Pennsylvania... AND defeating the anti-gay forces here in California... 2006 could be the turning point in ending anti-gay attacks across the nation.

So here's a resolution worth making for the New Year: GET INVOLVED!!

*Laurie McBride Sacramento Stonewall Political Action Committee Chair*

**twanda13@comcast.net**

## EQUALITY FOR ALL

An exceptional group of activists have come together to form the campaign committee working to fight whatever homophobic nonsense we might face on the ballot in 2006. Here is a list of current members of the Campaign Committee, Equality for All.

**National Stonewall Democrats**  
Laurie McBride, Co-Chair

**Family Pride Coalition**  
Corri Planck

**Palm Springs Mayor Ron Oden**  
Palm Springs

**ACLU San Diego & Imperial Counties**  
Dale Kelly Bankhead, Public Affairs Director

**Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund**  
Kevin Tilden, San Diego Board Member

**PFLAG**  
Samuel Thoron, National President

**ACLU of Southern California**  
Heather Carrigan, Director of Public Policy

**Human Rights Campaign**  
Seth Kilbourn, VP Marriage Project

**Planned Parenthood**  
Sue Dunlap

**Asian Equality**  
Andy Wong

**Lambda Legal, Los Angeles**  
Katherine Gabel

**Racial Justice Project, ACLU San Francisco**  
Maya Harris, Associate Director

**Asian/Pacific Island Caucus**  
Karin Wang

**Latino Coalition for Justice/LA**  
Daniel Delgadillo

**San Diego LGBT Community Center**  
Dr. Delores A. Jacobs, CEO

**Bienestar Human Services**  
Oscar De La O, President and CEO

**Log Cabin Republicans**  
Jeff Bissiri, Western Field Director

**San Francisco LGBT Community Center**  
Thom Lynch, Executive Director

**Black AIDS Institute**  
Phill Wilson, Executive Director

**L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center**  
Lorri L. Jean, CEO,

**The Task Force**  
Thalia Zepatos, Deputy Director

**Congregation Kol Ami, Los Angeles**  
Rabbi Denise Eger

**Metropolitan Community Church, Los Angeles**  
Reverend Neil Thomas

**Equality California**  
Geoff Kors, Executive Director

**National Center for Lesbian Rights**  
Kate Kendell, Esq., Executive Director



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## **SPEAKUP!**

*By: Ed Bennett*

Do you get irritated by something you see on the news? Hear on the radio? What do you do about it? When was the last time you wrote a letter to the Editor of the Sacramento Bee, in response to an article that particularly incensed you? When did you last call or write your local representative to voice your opinion about an issue? When did you last contact a local radio or TV station about an item on a broadcast that you found to be completely irresponsible or objectionable?

Do you know which companies support gay and lesbian rights in the workplace and, more importantly, which ones do not? Do you know which companies spent the most money in campaign contributions to right-wing causes? Do you take the news at its word? Do you further investigate? Do you question? Are you paying attention?

This next year is going to prove to be a "Fight for our Lives", as we battle the collective forces of evil in their efforts to undermine and destroy our LGBT community, and each of us needs to do whatever we possibly can do to let our friends, neighbors, co-workers know that we will not give in to their bigotry. Do what you can....write a letter to the Editor, call or write your representatives, call the television newsroom, encourage your friends to join Stonewall. It's time to get even more involved. We cannot afford to sit passively by and hope that it all works out for the best. Passivity will lead to destruction. Stand up and be counted. Question what you're told.

Thank you for taking the first step, by joining Sacramento Stonewall and/or renewing your membership. Together, we can and need to make a difference.

*Ed Bennett, Membership Chair*  
[membership@sacstonewall.org](mailto:membership@sacstonewall.org)

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

*By: Gretchen Bender*

Did you know that more than 39 percent of same-sex couples in the United States, age 25-55, are raising children, more than 250,000 of whom are under 18 years old?

Did you also know that gay families (I'll define a family as any two-parent household with children) are poorer than straight households? It's true. Recent research from UCLA shows that Same-sex couples with children have fewer financial resources than heterosexual married parents, with an average household income almost \$12,000 less and a 15 percent lower home ownership rate.

Same-sex households are also diverse. We live in all areas of the country and we come from a variety of racial, socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Gay and lesbian parents are more likely than straight parents to be African American and Latino, and the children of same-sex couples are similarly diverse...over 46 percent are children of color. What we share is that our families are left more vulnerable because we don't have access to the protections and obligations that come with marriage.

Why then do I sometimes feel like I am the only lesbian mother in Sacramento who cares about politics? Why is it like pulling teeth to get any of my friends to take an interest in issues that directly affect their ability to take care of themselves, their partners and their children? I've heard a million excuses. Here's the short list:

"I don't have time"

"I don't know where to start"

"It doesn't matter anyway"

"I can't make a difference"

"I'm a member of HRC"

And my favorite.... "It's not important." It's not important?!

Yes it is! Especially for gay and lesbian parents because marriage inequality truly harms our families and our children. It's still the case that many LGBT parents are forced to spend significant amounts of money to cobble together whatever legal protections they can -- if they are able to afford that at all -- because they can't access all the rights and responsibilities of marriage that come freely to heterosexual couples and parents. Marriage also helps provide for the emotional, psychological and financial well being of all children. Marriage is necessary to ensure ALL children grow into responsible, successful contributing adult members of society.

What it all boils down to is that there are no excuses. We live in the capitol of the wealthiest state in the union and one of the largest economies in the world. The opportunities to get involved are limitless and easy to find. But, where does one start? The easiest place to start is the internet. Simply google the phrase "Sacramento LGBT politics". What you'll get is a grocery list of organizations, articles and links to begin your journey to activism. You'll find that there are opportunities that fit every schedule, every circumstance and every interest. All you have to do is show up!

*Gretchen Bender, National Stonewall Boardmember*

*First they came for the communists,  
I did not speak out  
because I was not a communist.*

*When they came for the social democrats,  
I did not speak out  
because I was not a social democrat.*

*When they came for the trade unionists,  
I did not speak out  
because I was not a trade unionist.*

*When they came for the Jews,  
I did not speak out  
because I was not a Jew;*

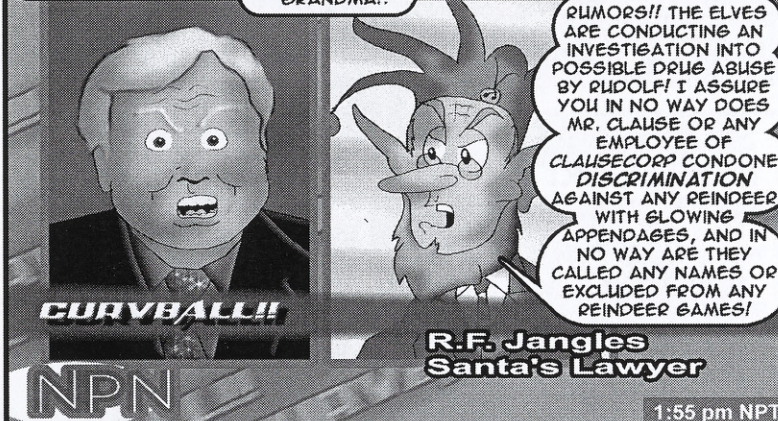
*And when they came for me,  
there was no one left to speak out.*

*Martin Niemoller, 1892-1984*



# SOME COMIC RELIEF FROM RON MULLINS **OUTRAGEOUS**

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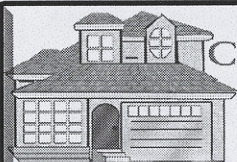
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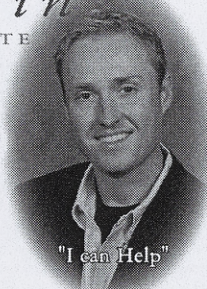
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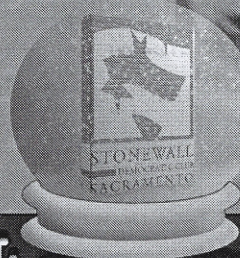
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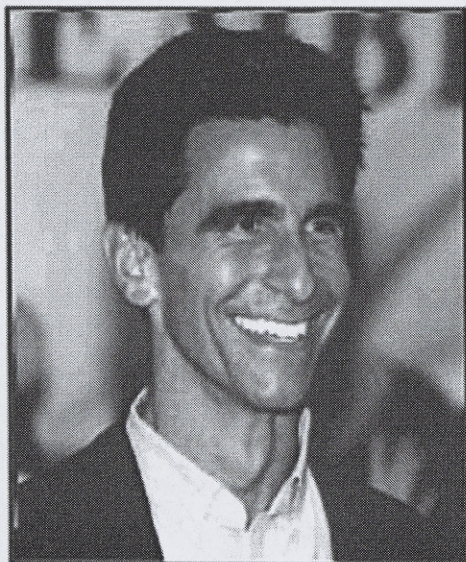
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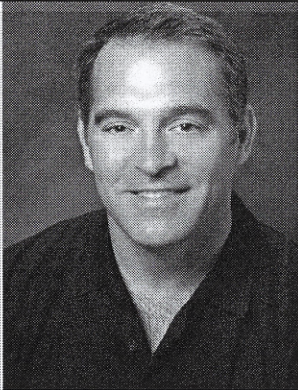
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**Assemblyman Mark Leno**





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*Stonewall Democrats,  
Keep up the Good work!*

*Many Thanks, Susan Patterson  
SMUD Board member*

We must scrupulously guard the civil rights  
and civil liberties of all citizens,  
whatever their background.  
We must remember that any oppression,  
any injustice, any hatred,  
is a wedge designed to attack our civilization."

Franklin D. Roosevelt



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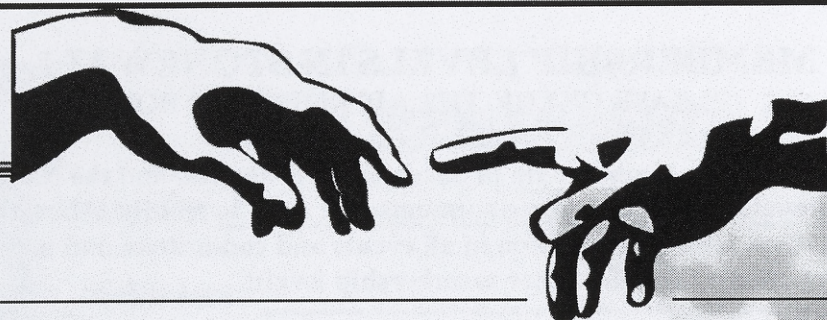
Every membership level includes membership in Sacramento Stonewall and the National Stonewall Democrats, quarterly newsletters, email announcements, the right to run for office, the right to vote on endorsements and donations, and participation in all events and committees and meetings. To raise additional funds for our efforts, we offer other membership levels:

- |   |   |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> GOLD - \$250       | - You get a quarter page ad in our four newsletters, a web link, a listing on our 4 Freedoms poster, and 10 raffle tickets at selected events.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLATINUM - \$500   | - You get a half page ad in our four newsletters, a link on our website, second choice on 4 Freedoms table, a listing on the program and poster at the 4 Freedoms dinner, and 25 raffle tickets at selected events.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TITANIUM - \$1,000 | - You get a full page ad in our four newsletters, a link on our website, as well as a web ad, 50 raffle tickets at selected events, a one time mailing to our membership (you give us the document, postage and we mail it out), preferential seating, a listing in our 4 Freedoms program and poster, a choice of a table at the 4 Freedoms dinner, plus the option for a hosted event at your business or home. |

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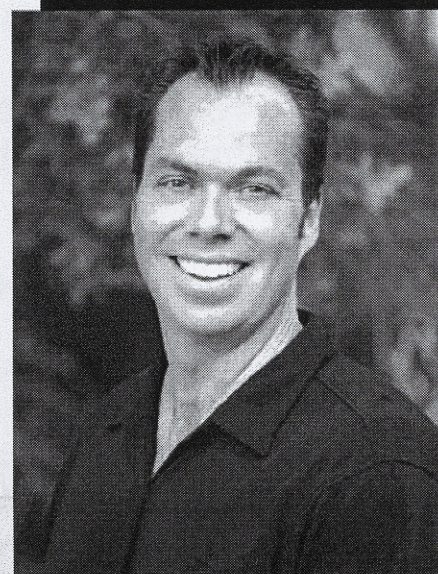
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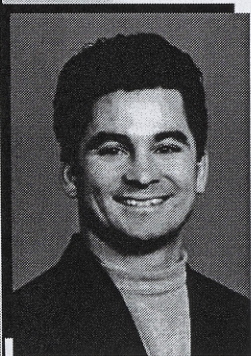


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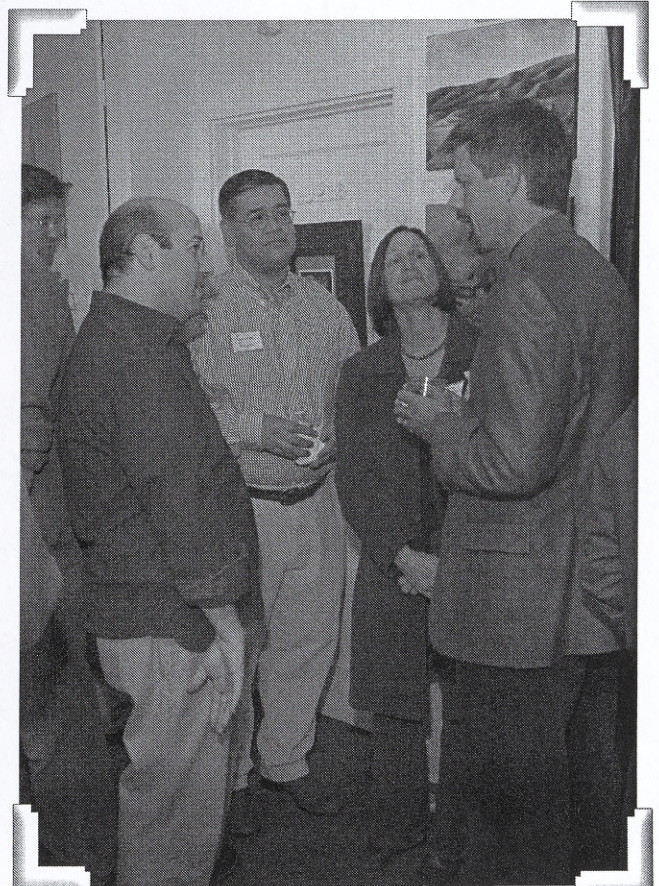
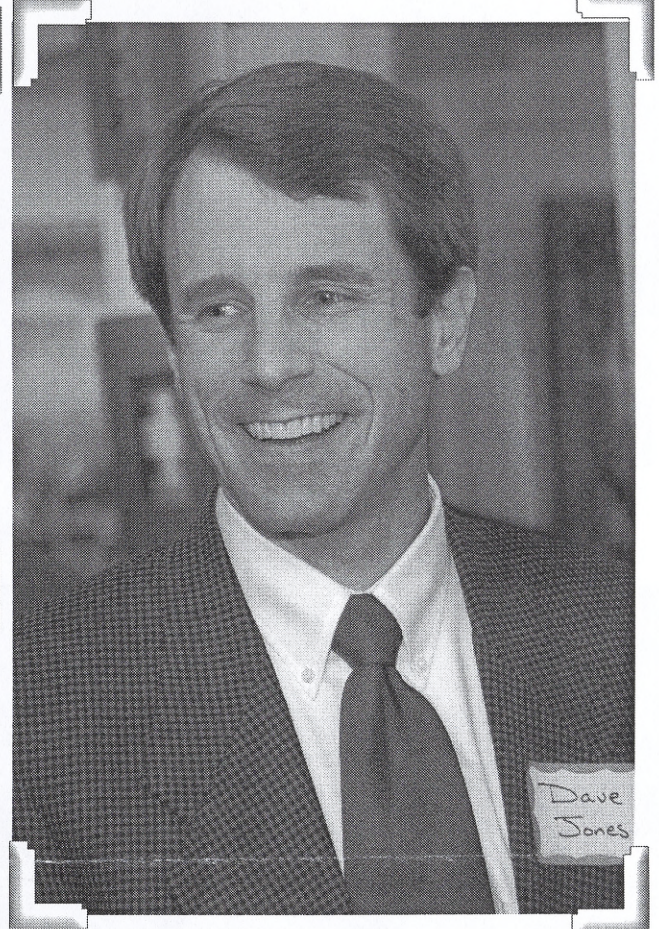
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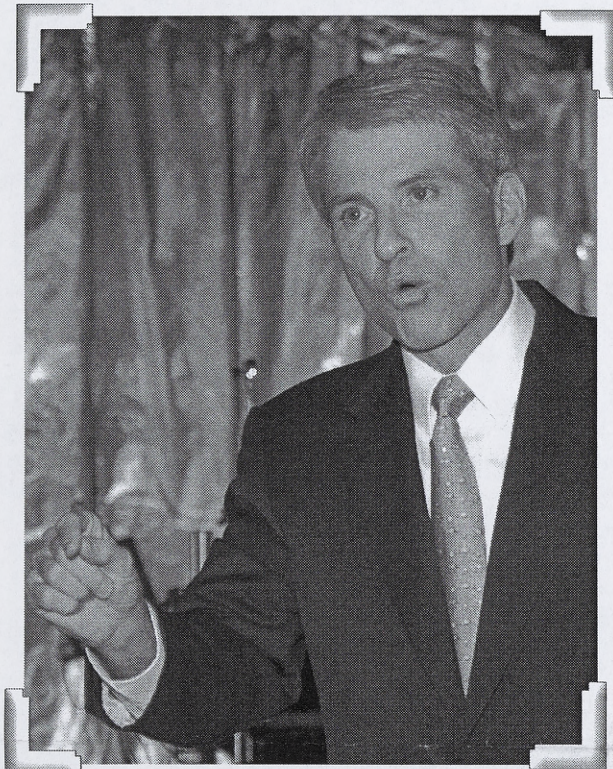
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## CONGRESSWOMAN MATSUI TALKS POLITICS AND ISSUES AFFECTING THE LGBT COMMUNITY

*By: Dan Roth*

On January 2 of this year I joined thousands of Sacramentans who were shocked and saddened by the news that our respected Congressman Bob Matsui had passed away. Elected to the House of Representatives in 1978, Congressman Matsui had been a leader both in Sacramento and throughout the nation as he pushed for legislation that brought light-rail to Sacramento, improved our levee system, as well as legislation that produced an apology and paid compensation to Japanese-Americans who were interned during World War II.

Two months following his death his widow Doris Matsui earned Stonewall's endorsement, and she used it as part of a coalition that garnered nearly 70% of the vote in a special election to replace her late-husband in Congress. Over the Veteran's Day Weekend, eight months after she was sworn in, I had the opportunity to sit down with Congresswoman Matsui over a cup of coffee to discuss issues that she is working on in

Washington as well as to get her insights on the national discussion on important issues facing the Democratic Party and the LGBT community.

After just a few minutes with the Congresswoman three facts become very clear: she has a passion to fight the Republican majority, a vision for the Democrats to retake the House of Representatives, and a bound of energy and a sense of humor to get the job done. She had flown home to Sacramento to attend several events ranging from a Veteran's Day Parade to an event at the Crocker Art Museum.

"Bikers to ballet," she quipped, as we quickly settled down to discuss the current state of affairs in Washington.

"The Republicans are falling apart," she explained. "Katrina let show their incompetence. The Republicans didn't understand what was wrong, and for four days they did not do anything. It has finally caught up to them. There is a certain arrogance. Look at FEMA. Arrogance leads to cronyism, and cronyism leads to corruption."

However, given all the problems with the Bush Administration and the Republican majority, Democrats in Congress are limited in the actions they can take to show the American people what the Republicans in power are really doing.

"The Republicans have all the levers of power," she continued. "If the Democrats were in the majority Henry Waxman (D-California) would chair the House Government Reform Committee. But because Democrats are not in the majority, he does not have the gavel nor subpoena power."

When we discussed what House Democrats are doing to win back the majority in 2006, Congresswoman Matsui responded, "We are getting smart. The Republican's Social Security plan was bad, but we did not put out our own plan. Instead, we told the American people why the Republican plan was bad, and we won."

"Right now the Republicans are suffering a lot of defeats. This is when we let the American people see what the Republicans really stand for."

However, she explained that the House Democrats "are putting together a plan that focuses on the core values of the Democratic Party."

"The Democratic Party is united now," she explained. "In the past Democrats felt they could vote and let Republicans off the hook. Now, over a half of the Democratic members of Congress have never experienced being in the majority. We cannot have a minority mindset."

She strongly believes that the 2006 elections will be like the 1974 post-Watergate elections when Democrats made large gains in Congress.

"2006 will be a race national in scope, not individual."

As for the role of civil rights for LGBT Americans under a Democratic majority, Congresswoman Matsui emphasized, "Under Democrats there will be less discrimination. We share core beliefs that every person would have an equal opportunity and not be discriminated against."

She emphasized issues that he colleagues are pushing, like Congressman Barney Frank (D-Massachusetts) who has introduced a measure that would grant same- and opposite-sex domestic partners of federal employees the benefits currently available only to legal spouses of federal employees, and Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-New York) who has introduced legislation which allows gay and lesbian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their permanent partners for residence in the United States.

"Democrats are introducing the issue, and we are making progress. People are looking at gay and lesbian issues in different types of ways. There is a push from the religious side. Within our own congregations, Episcopalians, Methodists. If you are truly religious, you welcome everybody."



When I asked what would be different this time if the Democrats controlled Washington, since in 1993 and 94 Democrats controlled Congress and the White House, but they did not pass employment non-discrimination and they adopted "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," she explained that 1993 was "a long time ago," and today "there is much more understanding of what works and what doesn't work."

"In the past there were those [Democratic members of Congress] that were not comfortable with gay and lesbian issues. Now, Democrats want to move these issues forward in a positive way."

As we moved the discussion from national issues to state politics, Congresswoman Matsui explained she is supporting California State Treasurer Phil Angelides for governor.

"Phil decided to run when Arnold was popular, and that says something. He is competent and understands the issues facing California. When Arnold won the recall he said we needed someone outside of politics. However, he did not do what he said he was going to do."

"We need a Governor who can work with the legislature so we are not dependent on initiatives."

Looking beyond 2006 to the Presidential election of 2008, I wanted to get Congresswoman Matsui's insight on possible Democratic candidates. In 1992 Mrs. Matsui was one of the first people to work on then Governor Clinton's Presidential campaign, and she served on his transition team after he was elected President. She also worked as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Public Liaison in the Clinton White House.

Although she has not endorsed a candidate yet because she is waiting until after the 2006 mid-term elections, she explained she is looking for a candidate who can "talk to the broad middle."

She would like to see a candidate who "talks to the Democratic Party's strengths and ideas. Someone who has a plan for improving education, children, and healthcare, our human infrastructure."

She is also looking for a candidate who is looking to improve our nation's highways, levees, and other important infrastructure.

"Most of our nation's infrastructure was built in the 1950s and 60s. We need someone with the creativity to help our citizens improve our infrastructure."

When I asked if the recent Democratic victories in the Virginia and New Jersey governor races was a sign of eminent Democratic wins nationwide, she stressed that she has learned we cannot take anything for granted.

"We need to stay focused on our lives and our county. You should never take a victory lap until we know everyone is taken care of."

Congresswoman Matsui concluded by thanking Stonewall and congratulating us on all our hard work.

"One of the things about being a member of Congress is the urgency to get to know each other, and with Stonewall we share similar values and ideals."

As we finished our coffee and said goodbye she again stressed that she would continue to work with Stonewall and the LGBT community throughout the upcoming year.

Next year the Republican majority in Congress as well as Republicans in California will continue to use hateful rhetoric to attack gays and lesbians, whether it is continuing to push an amendment that would permanently write our equal rights out of the Constitution or attacking fair minded judges who uphold equal rights for gay and lesbian Americans. However, behind the scenes we can be sure that our Congresswoman is laying the groundwork for a Democratic majority that will make laws to improve the lives of gay and lesbian Americans and bring an end an era of legalized gay bashing.

By Daniel Roth  
droth827@yahoo.com





## IMPERIALISM NOW

By Jerry O'Connor

I teach US History to high school juniors, young people who are 16 and 17 years of age. For the most part, I enjoy teaching students at this level—they are just old enough to engage in discussion and follow along a mature line of reasoning without mentally checking out before senioritis sets in.

On some days however, getting students to focus on the State Standards—with key ideas like imperialism and industrialization—can be a real challenge. You try to make the concepts relevant and stimulating, but at this age most students are no more interested in history than they are in wearing their pants at anything approximating waist-level. They are—much as we were—wrapped up in their own fashions, trends, and dramas. They believe—again, much as we did—that their generation is unique and special, one living in the most important and challenging age and the first to discover sex, drugs, and music that makes their parent wince.

Thank goodness for current events. Many students have at least a passing familiarity with the major news stories of the day, and while they rarely understand the complexity of an issue, they are more engaged when discussion of an incident in history can be compared with current events.

As a gay teacher, it certainly isn't difficult coming up with historical comparisons to today's demand for marriage equality. The creation of a segregated society after the Civil War and the Jim Crow laws that kept the races apart in marriage until 1967 absolutely fascinates today's students.

For the most part, they are blindly unaware of the terribly inhuman and unequal conditions for people of color in the United States between Reconstruction and the Civil Right Movement. Tell students about the story of Homer Plessy, who in 1892 was denied admission to a whites-only railway car because he was one-eighth African American, and your liable to get the response "That's messed up!" Transferring that indignation to other forms of discrimination, including that against sexual minorities, is becoming a little easier thanks in no small measure to the growing ranks of those gay and lesbian citizens who are refusing to live their lives in the closet.

Other historical comparisons might enlighten parents as well as students. Take President Bush's war in Iraq. There are striking parallels to be found in an earlier war, but not the one to which most people refer. Comparisons to Vietnam are understandable, what with so many people alive who were involved and well remember that war. But it was a much earlier adventure, one that occurred 100 years ago, that I have been referring to in my classes. The Spanish-American War, and especially our ensuing war of subjugation of the Philippines, has some interesting similarities to our situation in Iraq.

President Bush toured Asia exactly two years ago, and at a stop in the Philippines he drew a comparison between the US occupation of Iraq to the imperialistic rule of the Philippines from 1898 to 1946. Bush didn't really understand how much he insulted his hosts at the state dinner in Manila. He proudly reminded his audience that the United States freed the Philippines from Spanish colonial rule, but he conveniently forgot to mention that the US remained as imperial occupiers until after World War II, and kept US forces at Clark Air Base until 1992.

After defeating Spain in 1898, the United States refused to reward Filipino independence leader Emilio Aguinaldo with the self-determination he was promised. Aguinaldo began a two-year insurgency against American imperialist rule that cost 4,200 American and 16,000 Filipino lives. Anti-imperialists in the United States, featuring such notables as Mark Twain, were angered by reports of American atrocities during the war. US forces began scorching whole villages, shooting surrendering Filipino insurgents, and forcing accused guerilla sympathizers into concentration camps. I usually don't need to bring it up; some bright student will invariably mention Abu Ghraib. And although the scale of the atrocities cannot be equated, the mentality of imperialist rule is eerily consistent.

Two years after his last visit to the Philippines and extolling the virtues of American power, Bush might need someone to teach him the real lesson of imperialism. We remain mired in Iraq with no real end in sight and an administration unwilling or unable to lay out a timetable for our withdrawal. The President does not see the implication of his analogy between the Philippines of 1899 and Iraq of 2005. Will US troops remain in Iraq for a long time—perhaps, as in the Philippines, 48 years? Even my students, as self-absorbed as they are, can see a problem with that. It's messed up.

*Jerry O'Connor is a Social Science teacher at River City High School in West Sacramento, a board member of Respect Sacramento, and a member of Stonewall.*

## SMUD'S PROPOSAL TO ANNEX YOLO COUNTY

By Genevieve Shiroma

The story of SMUD's proposal to annex Yolo County is about regionalism, the benefits of public power, and a very good business deal to protect existing SMUD customers—a potential benefit of \$100 million dollars. In May 2005, the SMUD Board voted to annex portions of Yolo County. It was a decision based on extensive study and analyses to ensure a benefit to existing SMUD customers, as well as to Yolo customers.

Three years ago, representatives of Yolo County, West Sacramento, Woodland and Davis approached SMUD to request annexation. They were tired of higher bills and poor service under PG&E. During the years of deregulation in the late 1990's, PG&E legally siphoned millions of dollars from it's customers for out of state and out of county investments. During the energy crisis engineered by Enron and others, PG&E declared bankruptcy, yet is still giving its executives million dollar bonuses. The Yolo officials wanted out. They saw that SMUD rates were far below PG&E's (now 24% below) and as a publicly owned utility, we are responsive to our customers.

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE



SMUD is fiscally cautious. We have about 550,000 customers that we work hard to take care of. First we established criteria. We required the Yolo jurisdictions to share costs of an extensive business study which held SMUD customers harmless from annexation costs.

That study, referred to as the "Beck" study concluded it was a good business deal to annex the cities of West Sacramento, Woodland, Davis, and the county tracts in-between – about 70,000 customers. It concluded that even with these Yolo customers paying for the infrastructure purchase, exit fees, necessary upgrades to the equipment, the application, environmental impact report and legal fees – it was a good deal for all.

Because Yolo customers would be paying our SMUD rates, SMUD customers will see a big benefit. Our rates include investment back into the system to keep our rates low. More customers mean more profit. As a nonprofit utility, we invest that profit back into keeping our rates low. The 70,000 new customers would represent a \$100 million dollar benefit over 20 years. That benefit can buffer us against natural gas fluctuations and keep our rates low – it is a win-win for SMUD and Yolo.

The SMUD Board voted to apply at LAFCO to annex. The LAFCO process is underway with the goal of Yolo County customers voting in November 2006. This is typical annexation procedure.

As expected, PG&E will not let go of its customers willingly. PG&E argued its customers would be hurt. The state Public Utilities Commission recently rejected this claim and concluded this annexation will not hurt PG&E customers.

PG&E has hired the Townsend Raimundo firm and have started a petition drive to place an ordinance on the June 2006 ballot to force a vote in Sacramento County, using gross misinformation.

Please contact me at [gshiroma@juno.com](mailto:gshiroma@juno.com) if you would like more information or check out the SMUD website at [www.smud.org](http://www.smud.org). Thank you.

*Genevieve Shiroma, Vice President of SMUD Board*

## **A LESSON LEARNED: LOOK FOR THE UNION LABEL, NOT THE DIVISIVE ONE**

*By Ron Spingarn*

Liberal. Socialist. Conservative. Right-winger. These labels brand people and are often used for political name-calling. But what do they mean? Are they "real" or do they only have meaning relative to other people and ideas? Are we using them to unite us or divide them? Do labels do more harm than good?

During his campaign to win the Governor's office, Arnold Schwarzenegger touted that he would unite people and cross party lines to find solutions. Instead, shortly into his first term in office, he resorted to name-calling, notably with his "girlie man" comment, leveled threats to kick nurses' butts, and played "politics as usual" by breaking promises to fund schools and fund raising more money from special interest groups than his recalled predecessor.

Two years after taking office, he called a costly special election which he made into a referendum on his political agenda. People from most political persuasions have labeled it a disaster for the once-popular Governor. Even he admitted it was a mistake. What happened?

Throughout his first campaign for public office and first few months in the political spotlight, he repeatedly said that he would be "the people's governor." But then he vetoed bills passed by legislators who represent the people. Notably, he vetoed the marriage equality bill, the first time that such a bill was passed by both houses of any state legislature in the country. In his own way, he did achieve unity – among his critics. The Governor galvanized the opposition "in a way not seen in 30 years of politics" according to one union worker. He acted as the common enemy, bringing together many groups to form a cohesive coalition for the first time.

Members of our LGBT community, still stung by his veto of the marriage equality bill, worked alongside teachers, police officers, and fire fighters to oppose several of the governor's ballot initiatives designed to weaken them. We also joined women's health advocates motivated to fight a Governor-supported initiative that would have eroded young women's rights to have an abortion.

In the aftermath of the special election, the Governor at least sounded contrite and expressed his intent to work with all sides in the future. While many Democrats savored the victory, some of our party's members began a new round of name-calling, focusing their tirade on the Governor, despite the fact that name-calling tirades are not wanted by most Californians.

Lets reflect on who we are as people and consider who we want to be as a political party. There is tremendous diversity among Democrats, especially in California. Our party values diversity and strives to include a rainbow of people and ideas. If we want to live in ways that are guided by this ideal, then our actions and words need to support our values. We should expect, on occasion, that we will be antagonized to swing the first (or second) verbal punch in heated debates, and should plan accordingly to defend ourselves and our positions.

Name-calling, in fact, may be excused by the public when used as a last resort and supported with facts, or after repeated attempts to reason with an opponent. But, name-calling simply in response to someone else's doing it or out of anger negates our party's values of acceptance and inclusion.

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While we celebrate our 2005 special election victory, we should recommit to focusing on the issues in future battles, and, even if it would make a good sound bite, avoid unnecessary name-calling. We should strive to communicate our vision for the future, to motivate people to join our party, to support our causes and to vote for us. We should show people with both our actions and our words that we embody our party's values, that we value different opinions and that we respect each other, even our opponents, as people.

By engaging in name-calling or using political labels, we limit ourselves from reaching our full potential. More over, name-calling and labeling divides us as people when what we need to do is come together to form a more perfect union.

Ron Spingarn, Vice President  
vicepresident@sacstonewall.org

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MONTHLY MEETINGS

Held every 2nd Monday of each month at Club 21 1119 21st St, Sacramento. Each meeting normally consists of a special guest speaker and club business

## SPECIAL THANKS

Special Thank You to all of the Sacramento Stonewall members who donated time, resources, and money for the special election.

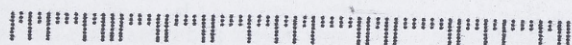
Thank You to Assemblymember Dave Jones

Thank You to Abundio Montez for donating the Phoenix Framing and Gallery and Refer a Chef Catering for helping us with food for the Dave Jones fundraiser.

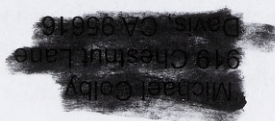
Congratulations to Todd Vlaanderen for winning an award at the Sacramento Unity Bar Annual Ceremony

Thank You to all of our members that made the Stop Santorum houseparty possible.

A very very special thank you to Ron Mullins for making this newsletter happen.



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